Statement Released by Education Minister Jane Purves

Department of Education

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Following is a statement issued today by Jane Purves, Minister of Education.

Earlier today, in an interview with David Rodenhiser of The Daily News, I was asked about my past and, specifically, about past drug use. While I consider this matter to be private, given my current position of public trust, I felt an obligation to answer the questions honestly and to share this information with Nova Scotians.

During my teens and 20s, I became seriously involved with drugs. Initially, I experimented with so-called soft drugs. However, this progressed to hard drugs, and I became addicted.

I sought professional help and, with the support of my family and friends, was able to recover. I have been free of the addiction for more than 20 years.

But, there have been lasting consequences.

I have a criminal record for possession of marijuana. I lost custody of my only child for a number of years. And, I learned that I had contracted Hepatitis C, as a result of drug use.

Before I entered public life, I knew that my past could, and likely would, become public. I shared this information with my party and with my leader. I made the decision then, that if and when this situation arose I would confront it openly and honestly.

Drug use could have ruined my life. It didn't.

I worked hard to recover; to re-establish my relationship with my son; and to build a productive career. And now, I look forward to making a contribution to my province.

Thank you.

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